

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

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FOR ASST. SECRETARY KATZ

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ETRD, UK
SUBJECT: ARAB BOYCOTT: ANTI-BOYCOTT REPORTING
REGULATIONS

REF: STATE 168024

1. SIR LEO PLIATZKY, THE PERMANENT SECRETARY OF THE
DEPARTMENT OF TRADE, ASKED THE E/C MINISTER TO COME IN
JULY 20 TO TALK ABOUT THE ANTI-BOYCOTT REPORTING REGULA-
TIONS.

2. PLIATZKY SAID THAT THE BRITISH ARE UNHAPPY WITH THE
BASIC REGULATIONS, ISSUED IN JANUARY, BUT SEE NO WAY TO
"NULLIFY" THEM. HOWEVER, IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED THAT THE
BRITISH GOVERNMENT COULD ISSUE A REGULATION ORDERING
BRITISH FIRMS (WHICH ARE SUBSIDIARIES OF AMERICAN
COMPANIES) NOT TO COMPLY WITH THE REPORTING REGULATIONS
WHICH ARE DUE TO COME INTO EFFECT AUGUST 1 (REFTEL).
PLIATZKY SAID HE WOULD PREFER CONSULTATIONS TO CONFRONTA-
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TION AND HENCE IS THINKING OF HAVING THE DEPARTMENT OF
TRADE SAY (IN RESPONSE TO A PLANTED PARLIAMENTARY QUES-
TION) THAT IT IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE REGULATIONS AND IS
DISCUSSING THEM WITH THE U.S. GOVERNMENT WITH A VIEW TO
MITIGATING THEIR EFFECT. IN ORDER TO MAKE SUCH A STATE-
MENT HE WOULD HAVE TO HAVE INITIATED SOME FORM OF
DISCUSSION, AND HE WAS DOING SO TODAY. AS A NEXT STEP,

REFLECTING ON HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH ASST. SECRETARY KATZ
LAST AUTUMN, HE THOUGHT HE MIGHT SEND A LETTER TO KATZ.
HE ALSO IS THINKING OF A MIDDLE-LEVEL OFFICIAL VISITING
WASHINGTON IN AUGUST, BASICALLY TO DEVELOP INFORMATION AS
TO HOW THE ANTI-BOYCOTT REGULATIONS ARE BEING INTER-
PRETED AND ENFORCED; AND OF A HIGHER LEVEL MISSION,
POSSIBLY INVOLVING PLIATZKY HIMSELF, IN SEPTEMBER--AT
WHICH TIME THE IDEA WOULD BE TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE
MODIFICATIONS OF THE REGULATIONS.

3. WE GATHERED FROM THE CONVERSATION THAT THE BRITISH
ARE UNCERTAIN JUST WHAT TRANSACTIONS WILL BE "IN U.S.
COMMERCE" AND THEREFORE REPORTABLE. WE ALSO GATHER THAT,
WHILE IT WOULD NOT MAKE MUCH SUBSTANTIVE DIFFERENCE,
THEY WOULD FOR FORMS SAKE PREFER THAT THE REPORTING
OBLIGATION REST WITH THE U.S. PARENT COMPANY RATHER THAN
WITH THE BRITISH SUBSIDIARY.

4. WE SAID WE TOO PREFER CONSULTATION TO CONFRONTATION
AND WE COULD SEE NO OBJECTION TO DISCUSSION OF WHATEVER
PROBLEMS THE U.K. HAS. WE SAID WE WOULD ASK WASHINGTON
WHETHER A VISIT IN AUGUST TO CLARIFY THE REGULATIONS AND
U.S. INTENTIONS WOULD BE CONVENIENT. MEANWHILE, WE
COULD SEE NO OBJECTION TO A LETTER TO KATZ.

5. WE WOULD APPRECIATE WASHINGTON'S ADVICE AS TO
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WHETHER APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS WOULD BE AVAILABLE FOR A
FACT-FINDING VISIT IN AUGUST AND ANY REACTION TO THE
SEPTEMBER DISCUSSIONS WHICH PLIATZKY SUGGESTS. BREWSTER

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